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Promptly and Neatly Executed.

THE NABOB UNCLE.

Or Deaf, Dumb and Blind.

BY AGNES L. JORDON.

Well, girls, prepare your sweetest smiles and
best behavior, for your uncle has arrived at last,
and I have just received this note, dated at the
Aston, announcing his coming, and accepting my
invitation to make our house his home. So,
to use his own expression, we may expect him,
"bag and baggage," this evening.

These words were addressed by Mrs. Med-
way to her daughters, as they sat at breakfast
in an elegant apartment in a fashionable street,
up town.

"That means, I suppose, that he comes with
an ebony serving man in an immense turban
half a dozen hussies, innumerable packages,
and self-indulgent contrivances, and all the ac-
cessories of an eastern nabob," replied Matilda.

"I wonder where we are to stow away all the
trash that he will undoubtedly pour in upon
us? I wish you had not invited him here,"
said Grace, who had not been invited to play
the day before, as she was perfectly willing to
play the day after.

"Not so with me," exclaimed her younger sister
Sophy; "I am determined to do as I please,
and not be like an automaton, at the will of a
cross old invalid, as I suppose we must have
got him, and he will be content to be looked
after and brooded to pieces, in one of the
rooms, while old yellow-face shivers with cold
and averts at the climate. And then we must
live on curries, and spices, and pilaws, and all
sorts of horrid nauseous messes, until we are
as yellow and bilious as himself. I boldly
protest against all such proceedings, and thus, once
for all, good people, declare myself free and in-
dependent."

"But recollect girls," said their mother, while
she laughed at Sophy's declaration, "he is your
father's brother, and as such entitled to at least
an appearance of respect. I wish he was less
afflicted, to be sure, for it will be a sad draw-
back, I fear, upon your amusements; but keep
your countenance, and remember that to be he-
re, as of an Indian nabob is a distinction very
much to be coveted, and shortly some sacrifices
to it."

"I am sure his deafness will be a great relief
to us all," chimed in Matilda, "so as we play
propriety, and have plenty of delicate attentions
and wretched smiles in readiness, we can in-
dulge once in a while in a theatrical 'sneeze'
of impatience, which will be quite a safety-valve
to the temper."

"But if he is an invalid, he must necessarily
be cross," answered Sophy, "and as his sight is
impaired, he will probably want some one to read
to him. That task I absolutely refuse to perform,
for as to reading anything more than the last
magazine, it is an effort I never was equal to."

"We will appoint Grace reader to his Indian
majesty. What say you, Grace, are you not
overwhelmed with the honor?"

This question was addressed to a quiet girl
who had hitherto taken no part in the conver-
sation, but who replied with a smile, "if your
uncle is the disagreeable person you describe,
I shall not be envious of the honor you design me;
but if he is in truth an invalid, I will wait on
him with cheerfulness, for you know I am accus-
tomed to a sick chamber."

"That's just like you, Grace, always ready and
willing to do for every one," answered Sophy.
"Of course he is an invalid—all nabobs are. He
has the gout, and we must all creep on tip-toe
about the room, lest an unlucky jar might give
him a twinge, and bring down a valley, out of
blessings, upon our devoted heads." Then the
liver complaint is a necessary appendage, and
blue pills and calomel will abound. But what
house it will be to be sure; I should not wonder
if he has a pet monkey and half a dozen
macaws, and we shall have messenger and mes-
sage. If such is the case, I shall run
off and get married; so don't wonder if some
morning I am missing."

"And thus forfeit your claim to the fortune in
store," said the sister, for my part, I am willing
to take a pill every other day, in the hope it will
prove at least a gilded one, and will feed the
macaws to a surfeit."

"In fact kill them with kindness," interrupted
Sophy, laughing. "Well, you are welcome to
all you can get; the pill will be bitter if it gilds
it. I love my macaws too well to be shackled, even
golden fetters; so Grace and you may divide the
labor and the reward."

Grace will of course do whatever is required
of her," said Mrs. Medway, gravely, "but as she
has no claim of kindred upon your uncle, she
will not expect any other return than my ap-
proval. And now, girls, we have spent a long
time chatting; I must go and prepare for our
relative's coming; and remember, Sophy, that
you treat him with all deference and re-
spect; you might have a little natural feeling—"

"All fudge, mamma," laughed Sophy, rising
from her seat; "a talk of natural feeling, in-
deed, for a cross old fogy fellow one never saw,
and scarcely ever heard of, except when he sent
you that superb India shawl. I tell you, mat-
rimony, it is a natural feeling for his presents
and his ruses that inspires you and Matilda; I will
none of them, except they come in a natural
way, without any force put on my inclination—"

"You know I am a little pickle, and I intend to
be as sour as vinegar."

"And I as sweet as honey-water," cried Mat-
ilda, as she left the room.

"Yes, and as insipid, too," replied her sister,
following. "As for you, Grace," she added, look-
ing back, "as you fortunately have no selfish con-
sideration, you can afford to be as you always
are, 'Simple Grace, gracious and graceful,' and
so saying, the noisy girl slammed the door after
her, leaving Grace to her daily duty of washing
the breakfast things, and arranging the room."

Mrs. Medway was the widow of a merchan-
t, who had left his widow possessed of a moderate
income, which they contrived like a thin plate
of gold, to cover a large surface. They lived up
to their means in every sense. Mrs. Medway
gave parties, kept several servants, lived in a
large house shrewdly furnished, and dressed her-
self and daughters splendidly. All this could
not be done without strict economy some-
where; and while the services of Mrs. Medway
were pronounced delightful, the servants much
complained of their daily fare. Mrs. Medway
was one of a class, there are hundreds who
rob Peter to pay Paul, and fast at home that
they may appear to feast abroad.

The coming of Jacob Medway, an elder brother
of her husband, who had spent his life in In-
dia, and now returned to his native land to en-
joy his fortune and find an heir, was an impor-
tant event to Mrs. Medway. She would rather
be sure, have him unacquainted with certain
parts of her household arrangement, but she
hoped to reap a golden harvest, and wished to
give her daughters an opportunity of ingratia-
ting themselves in his favor. These daughters
were handsome, shrewd, girls. Matilda, the el-
der, had been a decided belle for several seasons.
She was tall and slender, with very fine black
eyes, rather long face, and that distinguished air
and manner that stamps the woman of fashion.
She was very anxious to secure her uncle's fa-
vor, for she argued that a fine fortune might re-
store her the alliance that her fine person had
hitherto failed to win.

The youngest daughter, Sophy, with less beau-
ty than her sister, was still much admired. She
had a rattling, dashing way of saying pert, and
sometimes shrewd things, that passed for wit
among the fillers who surrounded her, though
they winced under the keenness of her remarks.
She was not amiable, but possessed a sturdy in-
dependence that was a redeeming trait, and
though often displaying in a most disagreeable
manner, was in reality much less selfish than her
soft-dipped sister.

The other inmate of the family whom we have
mentioned was Grace Addison—little Grace,
as she was wont to be affectionately termed in
her own happy home, but now "Simple Grace,"
as Sophy loved to call her. The mother of Grace
was a cousin of Mrs. Medway; she had been left
widow, in very straitened circumstances, her
husband dying when Grace was just fifteen.
Grief and anxiety threw her into a consumption,
and she died two years after, leaving her orphan
child to the care of her cousin, Mrs. Medway,
who had her herself tenderly reared under the
roof of Mrs. Addison's father, and upon whom
the grand daughter of her benefactor certainly
had a claim.

Mrs. Medway was a selfish woman, and the
charge was irksome; but the circumstances of
her own early life and adoption were so exten-
sive, known, that she dared not brave the en-
sures of her friends by refusing it; and thus
whilst Grace was ostensibly cared and provided
for, she was made to feel her dependence, and
had resolved in her own heart to seize the first
opportunity of releasing herself from this thrall-
dom, preferring to earn her daily bread, rather
than to receive it as a favor while she toiled for
it as a means. But her gentle and plaint na-
ture dreaded to offend or grieve Mrs. Medway,
for she knew that she was really essential to her;
whilst for Sophy, who as she at times appeared,
she felt a warm attachment, for she alone acted
towards her as an equal and a friend.

Grace Addison was not beautiful, but she had
charms enough to make her a dangerous rival
to the sister, as she appeared on equal terms with
her. She shrank, however, from society, and
seldom appeared at Mrs. Medway's soirees—
very much, it must be confessed, to that lady's
satisfaction. We have said that Grace was not
beautiful—lovely is the epithet properly be-
longing to her. Scarcely above the middle
height, her slender form was inexpressibly
graceful in all its attitudes; there was no an-
gle about her, Sophy said. Every accidental

position was a study for a sculptor—and never
was the gentle name of "Grace" more fully ap-
plied. Her deep, thoughtful blue eyes were
shaded by long black lashes, that rested on a
cheek whose deepest tint never exceeded the
glow on the lip of a sea-shell, and the delicate
features and rich masses of dark hair gave that
air of refinement so rare and so indescribable.

Such was the family of which the nabob, Ja-
cob Medway, was expected to become an in-
mate.

In Mrs. Medway's drawing-room the family
was assembled to receive the expected guest—
Sophy was ridiculing her sister, and imitating
the welcome which she said Matilda had learn-
ed by rote, when the noise of carriage-wheels
and presently a lead ring of the bell announced
the arrival. Mrs. Medway arose and went into
the hall, and then came the sound of trunks un-
stripped, and packages thrown in, and next,
enveloped in cloaks, the rich uncle stepped from
the carriage, and being welcomed by Mrs. Med-
way, was shown at once to his room, where ev-
ery accommodation for his comfort had been
made. He had a colored servant, and as many
packages as even Matilda expected, but no pet
monkey or macaws as yet appeared.

"Well, mamma, what is he like?" exclaimed
both daughters in a breath, as she re-entered
the hall.

"Tall, stout, and full of himself," she an-
swered. "He does not appear to be gouty,
however, for he stepped quite firmly into the
hall, and his voice is pleasant and not at all
cross."

"So, perhaps, Matilda will not have the grati-
fication of being a martyr after all," cried So-
phy, laughing; her honey-water still ran over
keeping, and my vinegar became flat; well, after
all, I am a little disappointed. I don't be-
lieve he is at all rich, Matilda, unless he is
gouty, cross, and everything bad; it would be too
much of a good thing if he were."

Matilda did not mix her sister's rail-
lery, and a sharp reply rose to her lips, as the
door opened and her uncle entered. Mrs. Med-
way immediately rose, and introduced him to
her daughters, and Grace offered him the wine
which he politely accepted, and then ex-
pressed, in a very few words, his thanks for her
courtesy.

He was of course an object of great interest
to the little group, and did not altogether dis-
appoint their expectations.

Uncle Medway was tall, and rather stout,
with a fine open countenance, yellow and brown
to be sure, in his face, but the expression of his
mouth contradicted all such ideas of ill-health.
His eyes were small, with a keen, shrewd, search-
ing expression; and one could scarcely credit
that their vision was impaired so that, without
glasses, he could not distinguish minute ob-
jects. He carried an ear-cornet in his hand, and ap-
ologized for his infirmities, speaking in a nervous
and abrupt manner.

"You will find me a troublesome inmate, I
fear, madam," he said to Mrs. Medway; "my
infirmities make me a poor companion. I am a
man of few words, and my loss of hearing ren-
ders it almost impossible to enjoy the conver-
sation of others, while even the pleasure of read-
ing is in part denied me."

"My daughters will be delighted to serve you
in every way," said Mrs. Medway, graciously.

"Now is your chance," loudly whispered So-
phy to her sister, "lay your eyes, ears and tongue
at the feet of your golden idol!"

"Sophy!" exclaimed her mother in an agony;
but the sight of the ear-cornet calmed her fears.

The evening passed slowly away. Uncle
Medway retired early, and the young ladies,
after exchanging opinions of him, went to rest,
to dream golden dreams, as Sophy maliciously
said.

Uncle Medway did not appear at breakfast
the following morning; but during the forenoon
when the young ladies were occupied at their
several employments, he unexpectedly entered,
and with an apologetic smile and bow, took the
seat which Matilda hastened to offer, tendering
at the same time very affectionate enquiries re-
garding his health. The old gentleman quietly
put on his glasses and lowered his ear-cornet,
requesting her to repeat her words, while So-
phy maliciously offered to prompt her in case
she forgot her lesson. Matilda looked thunder
at her sister, and sunshine at her uncle, as she
repeated her questions.

"I rested pretty well, thank you," said her un-
cle, "and as I hope to be one better acquainted
in time, you will not, I trust, be offended at my
verbosity." He took Matilda's hand as he spoke,
and looked earnestly into her countenance.

"Do you consider me like papa?" she inquired,
with most engaging smile, and speaking in
the earnest, without which it was evident he
could have nothing.

"Humph! not so; your sister there is more
like him," he answered, pointing with his ear-
trumpet to Sophy.

"There, Matilda, is a thousand lost to you,"
laughed the giddy girl.

"What does she say?" asked the old gentle-
man, casting a shrewd look at her; "come here,
my dear, and tell me yourself."

Sophy rose, and courted before him, as she
said to Grace, "Your turn next—so prepare,"
wondering if the old Indian thinks he can turn
about as he would some China ornaments, while
the old gentleman added, "Say nothing about this

we stand bobbing like so many mandarins before
him?" then turning to her uncle, she added, "I
am delighted that you think I resemble my sis-
ter, sir, although Matilda is counted the beau-
ty, and I the fright."

"Oh, Sophy, how can you rattle so?" exclaimed
her uncle.

"Now hush, Grace, until your turn comes—
You know I always speak out what I think."

"Especially when you know one party at least
cannot hear," said her sister, sarcastically.

"You all seem chattering away among your-
selves like so many magpies," said the old gen-
tleman. "But, who is this young lady in the cor-
ner?"

"Our cousin, Grace Addison," screamed So-
phy, at the top of her voice, "and the dearest,
best, kindest cousin in the world. She makes
her flowers, sketches in her album, and does a
thousand things for which others get the credit;
and more than all, she bears all my impertin-
ences, and never gets out of patience. Now,
Grace, turning towards her, "you are properly
introduced, come and speak for yourself. I
think I have made one party at least here this
time," she added, to her sister, "and if old yellow-
face has half as much generosity as he should
have, there is a nice little plum in store for
simple Grace." So saying, she ran out of the room.

When the party met at dinner, there were
several dishes cooked to suit Uncle Medway's
taste, and among the rest a curry. Mrs. Med-
way and Matilda accepted some of the proffered
viand, but when the old gentleman politely turned
to Sophy, she exclaimed—

"No, I thank you, none of your nauseous
meats for me; the very smell of them takes
away my appetite. Mamma, after this, I think
I shall dine in my own room."

"What does the young lady say?" asked Un-
cle Medway, elevating his cornet, "that she has
no appetite?"

"I say I can't bear curry," screamed Sophy.

"Oh, Sophy, how can you be so rude?" said
her mother, in despair.

"Because I hate hypocrisy," answered the other
sister. "There sits Matilda, striving to ap-
pear to eat what I know she abhors—afraid to
say what her likes or dislikes are; it would not
be worth the effort she makes to swallow it, if
the hateful curry-powder will gold dust. See,
and I dare say, too, I dare say, for
shame, Matilda, Uncle Medway must, indeed be
deaf, dumb and blind, not to discover in a short
time all your false pretences." Sophy spoke ra-
pidly, despite of both mother's and sister's at-
tempts to stop her, and Grace's appealing looks.
Secure in their guest's entire deafness, she rail-
ed severely at the deceit she despised. Uncle
Medway cast a searching look towards Matilda,
and then turning to Grace, who sat next him,
invited her to partake of his favorite dish—
Grace thanked him, but declined.

"What, said he, with a smile, 'can't you bear
curry, either? Perhaps you have never tasted it.'"

"I am not fond of it. I confess," answered
Grace. "I have often seen it on my gran-
father's table, and he tried in vain to induce me
to like it."

Again those shrewd eyes of Uncle Medway
rested on Grace's countenance, and no further
discussion arising, the dinner passed pleasantly
off.

After dinner Grace was left alone with the
old gentleman, while the sisters took their usual
promenade; when, suddenly turning towards
her, he said in his peculiar abrupt manner:

"Who was your grandfather?"

Grace looked up in surprise, but immediately
answered, "My grandfather's name was Maurice
Addison."

"And your father's?"

"Jacob Addison; he was born in India,"
and then, with a sudden impulse, she exclaimed,
"Oh, Mr. Medway, did you know my grandfa-
ther? Are you not the old friend I have so
often heard him mention, who went out to India
with him, and who was so true and kind to him
in illness and trouble? You are, I am sure, and
my father was named after you, Jacob Addison!"

It was unusual for the quiet Grace to be roused
to such enthusiasm; but she rose from her seat,
and laying her hand on the old gentleman's chair,
looked into his face with such an affectionate
and expectant gaze, that his heart must have
been adamant indeed to resist it. And as his
was, in reality, a loving and unselfish heart, he
drew Grace gently towards him, and a pleasant
smile lighted up his face, as he said—

"And are you Maurice Addison's own little
merry girl, Grace, so often mentioned in his
letters to me? You are, I am sure, and you
are the daughter of my little godson, Jacob,
who was only knee-high when I saw him last—"

"And now, my dear child, for surely I have a
right to call you so, why are you living here?
Where are your parents?"

"Tears started in Grace's eyes as she related
the circumstances of her parents' death and her
education into Mrs. Medway's family, adding,
that though they were all very kind to her, she
would remain no longer than until she could
procure an independent situation, as she feared
Mrs. Medway's circumstances, she was a bur-
den."

"Humph! was the only reply; and then the
old gentleman added, "Say nothing about this

conversation, if you please, until I give you per-
sonal mission."

Grace willingly assented; she knew that Mrs.
Medway would not like to believe she possessed
any claim, however slight, on Uncle Medway's
regard; and although feeling an attachment to
him for her grandfather's sake, had not the slight-
est idea of endeavoring to rival her cousins.

One morning Uncle Medway expressed a de-
sire to drive through the city, and wished one of
the ladies to accompany him as a chaperone—
Matilda's services were instantly offered, and
politely accepted. On their return, Matilda
threw herself on a sofa, exclaiming to her moth-
er—

"Well, I never was so wearied in all my life;
and I consider this splendid dress, which uncle
purchased for me at Stewart's, as very hardly
earned. Never will I consent to be driven
about, shut up in a carriage with such a per-
verse, questioning old codger again for a dozen
dresses. Why, the old man seemed to think I
must know the whole history of the city, from
its first settlement; we will have to lend him
Diedrich Knickerbocker's book. And then such
stopping to admire the churches and other build-
ings, while groups of fashionables passed and
stared; it is an ordeal I never will pass through
again!"

"The honey-water is exhausted, is it?" asked
Sophy. "You gave it in too large quantities at
first; well, for my part, I might be induced to
take one drive, with such a reward in view."

"What is that?" asked the uncle, turning
sharply round, "don't Matilda like her dress?"

"I shall answer for you," said Sophy.

"Oh! yes," interrupted Mrs. Medway, "she
was expressing her admiration and gratitude;
but she says she will fear to go with you again,
least you should think her motives interested."

"Humph! motives are apparent enough," in-
terrupted the old gentleman; then turning to Grace,
he said, "Will you accompany me to-morrow,
Grace? I promise faithfully that you shall have
no reward save the consciousness of obliging a
troublesome old man."

Grace gladly assented, and Mrs. Medway's
consent being given, Grace became the almost
daily companion of the old gentleman, who seem-
ed, however, to bestow but little notice on her,
lavishing all his preference on Matilda, who was
elated with her success.

A few days after, Uncle Medway brought
down a closely written letter of several pages,
which he asked Matilda to copy for him, as she
had so often expressed the pleasure it gave her
to do anything for her dear uncle. Matilda re-
ceived the document with a graceful smile, and
promised it should be done by the following
morning. That evening the sisters went out
with their mother, Mr. Medway retired early to
his own room, but having occasion to come down
again for his glasses, he saw Grace bending over
a table on which were spread writing materials.
She leaned her head on her clasped hands, and
sighed heavily. As he entered the room she
looked up and hastily drew a blank sheet over
the page she had written.

"You look pale, child," said the old gentleman,
as he put on his spectacles. "What are you do-
ing there?"

"Only writing a little—but I have a severe
headache," answered Grace.

"Go to bed, then. What are you poking your
eyes out there for? I dare say some long let-
ter to a sentimental friend, eh?" He approach-
ed the table as he spoke.

"You shall not see it, if it is," said Grace, play-
fully putting her hand on the paper, "and I must
finish it to-night, because I have promised"—she
paused.

"Well, well," said the old man, kindly, "prom-
ises must be kept, of course. I hope Matilda
has kept her promise of copying my letter. Do
you think it will be finished by to-morrow morn-
ing, Grace? And without waiting a reply he
left the room."

The following morning the letter and copy
were laid by Uncle Medway's plate, and the old
gentleman, examining it with an approving
glance, took a fifty dollar note from his pocket-
book, and said, "I do not wish to offend by offer-
ing a remuneration for this correct and beauti-
ful copy; but I know you ladies have always
some charitable object of interest, and the fair
writer of this must have devoted many hours to
its accomplishment. It will gratify her to have
the power of doing good in every way—a power
which will, perhaps, ere long, be unlimited.
Will you accept it, Matilda, as to you it justly
belongs, and be my almoner?"

Matilda's eyes sparkled; this speech inferred
much, and as she gracefully took the note, she
thanked her uncle and promised to dispose of it
in charitable donations.

After breakfast, Uncle Medway was deeply
engrossed in a paper which he was endeavoring
to decipher, and the sisters were sitting togeth-
er, when Sophy said,

"Well, Matilda, what charitable institution do
you intend to benefit by uncle's donation; as
you cannot the money so honorably, you will of
course distribute it with equal honesty and justice."

Matilda colored slightly, but laughed saying,
"I shall do myself the charity to purchase that
superb head-dress, and several costly cut easter
that I want for Mrs. Dayton's ball, and if you
are a good girl and hold your tongue, you shall
be an object of charity, too."

"Now, Matilda, that is too mean, even for
you," exclaimed the other indignantly. "Shame
on you, as Grace really copied the letter, she
should at least have the privilege of distributing
the money; here she comes now. Grace, in
what way ought uncle's donation to be applied
—you are the proper person to decide, and pre-
vent Matilda from the selfishness she contem-
plates, in bestowing it all upon herself and me."

Her sister crimsoned with anger, but Grace
spoke.

"I am sure you do Matilda injustice, Sophy;
she would never act so deliberately a falsehood;
as she told her uncle it should be applied to
charity, she will certainly keep her word. And
there is poor Mrs. Brown, the laundress, it would,
indeed, be a charity to assist her—"

"And begit by paying her bill," interrupted
Sophy.

But her sister rising angrily exclaimed, "I will
not be dictated to by either of you," and hastily
left the apartment.

Uncle Medway had now been domesticated in
the family for several weeks, and must indeed
have been deaf, dumb and blind, to remain ig-
norant of the by-play going on around. Secure
in his entire deafness, Matilda frequently made
use of her safety-valve aside; and once, when
requested by her uncle to play, and she said to
her sister, "I hope to have the pleasure of play-
ing the Dead March for him ere long," she caught
his eye fixed upon her with such a severe glance,
that a momentary doubt of his inability to hear
made her tremble; but again assured by his
bland manner toward her, she plied her fulsome
flatteries more assiduously than ever. Grace of-
ten wondered how one so clear-headed in all
other things, should be so easily imposed upon,
while Sophy regarded her sister with undisguis-
ed contempt, and by way of offset became more
rude and impudent than ever.

The rich uncle had been a great assistance
to the household, his generous heart prompting him
to make those presents which he saw were re-
quired—and this was done in the most delicate
manner. It was with mingled feelings, there-
fore, that Mrs. Medway met the information that
he one day gave, that he had purchased a house
in one of the most fashionable squares, and de-
sired the taste of the ladies to assist him in fur-
nishing it. He intended to celebrate his installa-
tion in his new home, by a splendid ball and
supper, to which, as he had few acquaintances,
he begged the ladies to invite those friends whose
society was desirable. He also told Mrs. Med-
way in confidence, that if she would part with
one of her fair charges, he wished on the ap-
pointed evening, publicly to announce his choice
of one of them as his heiress and adopted daugh-
ter, on condition that she resided with him to
cherish his lonely old age. Mrs. Medway gave a
delighted assent. She had no doubt on whom
the choice would fall, and immediately congrat-
ulated Matilda, and caused it to be whispered
among her confidential friends that her eldest
daughter would be the heiress of the Indian na-
bob. Matilda declared the affliction of residing
with such a horrid bore a severe penalty, but
promised herself the satisfaction of spending his
money at pleasure, while Sophy maliciously ad-
vised her to practice the "Garden of Blinney"
preparatory to the "Dead March."

The important evening arrived, and the three
young ladies elegantly attired in dresses of em-
broided crepe over Indian satin, presented by
Uncle Medway, took their places in his splendid
saloon to receive their guests. Matilda evi-
dently took the precedence, and very handsome she
looked in her stately beauty, doing the honors
with all the grace which the future mistress of
so superb an establishment should possess,
while Grace, looking perfectly lovely in her pure
and tasteful dress, shrank abashed from the ad-
miring gaze bestowed upon her, and was abash-
ed by the attention she excited. Uncle Med-
way went cheerfully among his guests, ear-cornet
in hand, and speeches on nose, quizzed by some
respected by many, and flattered by all.

Just as supper was announced, and the mu-
sicians had left the hall for the supper-room, Un-
cle Medway, supporting Mrs. Medway on his
arm, and followed by the young ladies, stepped
into the midst of the brilliant circle and said,

"My guests are aware, I suppose, of my inten-
tion to adopt one of these fair young ladies as
my sole heiress, my sister-in-law having kindly
consented to spare one from her bright circle—
I am a lonely old man, with many peculiar na-
tions, and I require, therefore, a cheerful, yet
gentle and patient spirit, to support my whims.
Such an one I have found in the person of Grace
Addison, the grand-child of my oldest friend,
and the daughter of my namesake and godson.
I therefore declare her my adopted child and
heiress."

A murmur of surprise ran through the assem-
bly, and Mrs. Medway and Matilda seemed re-
ady to sink with confusion. Sophy clapped her
hands, and Grace, pale and trembling with sur-
prise and emotion, suffered herself to be led for-
ward by the old gentleman, who continued:

"I have met with much kindness and atten-
tion beneath the roof of my

